

MATRIX OF RECOMMENDATIONS

TO INCREASE COMPETITIVENESS AND MARKET ACCESS OF ALBANIAN NON-FOOD PRODUCTS WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS - BUSINESS PERCEPTIONS

03 September 2024

This matrix of recommendations aims to summarize the recommendations and solutions proposed in the Technical Note and serves as an Internal Plan for monitoring from AIC secretariat team to follow up their implementation. The recommendations implementation requires actions and the proactive role of both governmental institutions and the business community.

The following recommendations are the result of the analysis and consultations of the IC Secretariat with a significant number of actors and experts in both the private and public sectors on the topic, referring to four pillars: a) awareness of entrepreneurs on general and specific legislation requirements on the compliance with standards/technical regulation/market surveillance, b) access to information, c) institutional support if they want to be compliant with standards d) current local capacities of enforcement/inspections.

Intervention /Recommendation	Responsible institutions/ Institutions included in implementation	Term
<p>At the strategic level, MEKI should: a) start creating a database of domestic producers categorized by their products and conduct comprehensive analyses to identify priority/strategic sectors with competitive potential both domestically and for export; b) consider developing supporting policies for these identified sectors. This database can serve as a starting point for further analysis from a local competitive perspective and should be updated annually. Such data are of great importance for MEKI in performing relevant competitive analyses for the sector, identifying priority products and sectors along with their issues, developing appropriate policies and incentives, and negotiating agreements at the regional level. This process also requires the involvement of chambers of commerce, GCD, business associations, and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>MECI GDT GDC Chambers of Commerce Business Associations</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>

<p>Recommendation 2. MECI takes the lead and coordinates with other institutions¹ to build a single website/portal/hub publicly available that serves as a unique window of information and guidance for import and export of products, including technical requirements/regulations, procedures, formalities and requirements, rules of origin, export measures², legislation for goods, and quality infrastructure. It should ensure the sustainability of information regardless of the reorganization of ministries in time (separating or joining functions under their portfolio), and the interested companies could find accurate and accessible information regarding their product. Relevant examples are the following: (1) Access2markets; (2) One shop for compliance; (3) Sector for quality and product safety.</p>	<p>MECI NAIS Ministries Government agencies</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>Recommendation 3. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy should accelerate the transposition of the new EU Regulation on construction products and develop the necessary regulatory requirements for various types of construction works. This step is crucial, especially in light of the recent reform of the EU's Green Agenda, which now includes candidate countries. Albania is the only country in CEFTA that hasn't transposed it yet. Aiming to achieve proper functioning of the internal market, MIE should speed up the transposition of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) and prepare regulations for construction works accordingly. This requires coordination and joint actions of government institutions with all stakeholders: consultancy companies, manufacturers, importers, builders, conformity assessment bodies, quality infrastructure representatives, etc. Also, it is necessary to "educate" and help manufacturers to "build" their reliable website with the necessary information that would cover data on how to build compliance with technical requirements/regulations, procedures, formalities and requirements, rules of origin, export measures legislation for goods, quality infrastructure including conformity assessment certificates should have data from manufacturers.</p>	<p>MIE MECI</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Recommendation 4. Strengthen law enforcement through market surveillance/state institutions/inspectorates, improve the inspection process, and improve inspectors' competencies and integrity. It is suggested: (1) Stronger requirements, strict process and transparent selection of inspectors, (2) monitoring process of inspectors be based on risk model, (3) frequent training and evaluation based on performance quality for inspectors, (4) set up a whistleblowing procedure allowing anonym notifications from different stakeholders (consumers, companies subject of inspection procedure, etc.) as a helpful tool for</p>	<p>Central Inspectorate Inspectorates</p>	<p>Short-term</p>

¹ National Agency of Information Society (AKSHI), ministries, government agencies.

² To be further analyzed the structure with the Export Portal.

<p>initiating an investigation by an impartial structure related to a reported corruptive behaviour of inspector, lack of their competence or impartiality during the inspection process.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 5. Chambers of Commerce/Business Associations should upgrade/enforce their capacities (e.g. Hub) on up-to-date information regarding technical regulations and quality infrastructure (green, digital, sustainable), initially in priority sectors. It is recommended that these structures take measures, upgrade their capacities, advocate for and provide internal/external expertise in this direction for their members.</p>	<p>Chambers of Commerce Business Associations</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Recommendation 6. MECI should coordinate with other line relevant ministries such as MIE, AIDA, and CCIs to undertake ongoing awareness-raising actions/campaigns to improve companies' knowledge about general and specific legislation related to compliance with new EU directives on standards (ESG), technical regulations, market surveillance, etc.</p>	<p>MECI MIE AIDA Chambers of Commerce Business Associations</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>

<p>Suggestions from Members</p>	<p>Referent subject of the suggestion</p>
<p>The government needs to take a more serious approach to developing a market strategy that helps Albanian companies meet EU standards while providing financial support for the necessary investments.</p>	<p>Women's Economic Chamber</p>
<p>Investment Policy Redesign: Proposed redesigning investment policies to attract foreign investors focused on global value chains, aiming to connect Albanian producers with the global market</p>	<p>World Bank</p>
<p>Border Crossing Improvements: There is an urgent need to enhance border crossing points to prevent delays and spoilage of products, especially agricultural ones, by ensuring faster and more efficient processing.</p>	<p>World Bank</p>

Abbreviations:

MECI – Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation

MIE – Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy

MSHMS – Minister of State for Protection of Entrepreneurship

NAIS – National Agency of Information Services (AKSHI)

NBC – National Business Center (QKB)

AIDA - Albanian Investment Development Agency

MBZHR – Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

AZHBR – Agricultural Rural Development Agency

GDT – General Directory of Taxes

GDC – General Directory of Customs

Term:

Short-term- period from 1 to 6 months.

Medium-term – period from 6 months to 1 year.

Long-term – period over 1 year.